

NEWS RELEASE
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HOUSE APPROVES ISTOOK SPENDING CUTS OKC PROJECT SURVIVES

Washington, D.C. - The House of Representatives today gave final approval to an Appropriations bill, after slashing it by \$190 million at the urging of Rep. Ernest Istook, (R-OK).

House and Senate negotiators, prompted by Istook, agreed Thursday night to cut \$190-million in spending and fee hikes from the 1995 budget. The spending was for federal construction projects and fees to be charged taxpayers by the Internal Revenue Service.

"It's been quite an adventure to get these cuts made, and shepherd them through negotiations," Istook said. "If we could cut spending like this on a regular basis, the federal budget would be in far better shape than it is today."

Istook noted that funding for an Oklahoma project (\$5.3 million for repairs to Oklahoma City's Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building) remained intact in the bill. Istook commented, **"I'm pleased we were able to cut the \$190 million without sacrificing this Oklahoma City project, which had been rated as a high priority."**

The spending will be cut from federal construction of courthouses and office buildings, which have been criticized as overpriced and excessive. The reduced user fees are IRS fees charged to provide extra copies of tax returns, and for persons paying back taxes in installments.

The bill is expected to pass the Senate with Istook's cuts intact.